

WASHINGTON – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today welcomed a delegation of 34 central Alabama veterans who visited the National World War II Memorial in Washington as part of the inaugural Birmingham Honor Flight.

Former Senator Robert Dole, a decorated World War II hero who led the successful campaign to build the Memorial, met with the group at the invitation of Congressman Bachus.

Honor Flight is a volunteer organization that arranges one-day trips for World War II veterans to and from the Memorial free of charge. The Alabama group included Sixth District veterans from Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Tuscaloosa counties.

Bachus spoke to the veterans group in front of the Alabama column at the Memorial.

Bachus said, "The National World War Two Memorial is our tribute to you, the brave soldiers who preserved freedom during democracy's darkest hour. Generations to come will call to mind your service and sacrifice with great reverence. You are called the 'Greatest Generation' not just for what you did during the war, but for the way you built our country after the war. Honor Flight has done a great thing by bringing our veterans to Washington to see this magnificent memorial, meet with their fellow veterans, and remind all of us that we enjoy freedom today because of sacrifices made more than six decades ago."

The veterans on the Birmingham Honor Flight were accompanied by 19 area volunteers and also assisted by Cindy Pate from Congressman Bachus' Birmingham District Office. The trip was the first of several to the Memorial planned by the all-volunteer organization co-chaired locally by Pam Nichols and Amy McDonald of Shelby County.

*(Editors: The names of the veterans on the Birmingham Honor Flight follow.)*

Ken Leroy Faulkner, Shelby County

Sterling Brewer, Hoover, Jefferson County

Charlie Burton, Maylene, Shelby County

Joseph (Joe) Annino, Hoover, Jefferson County

Peter Anella, Sr., Shelby County

Harold Jarvis, Mount Olive, Jefferson County

Elwell Thomas, Centerpoint, Jefferson County

Thomas White, Springville, Jefferson County

Forrest Bruner, Centerpoint, Jefferson County

Cecil Norris, Hueytown, Jefferson County

Chester L. Whited, Vestavia Hills

Eugene McCarthy, Cullman, Cullman County

John Key, Crestwood, Jefferson County

Joseph Darnell, Birmingham, Jefferson County

Richard Higgins, Cook Springs, St. Clair County

Cecil Wooten, Bessemer, Jefferson County, Jefferson County

Marvin "Joe" Wolverton, Highland Park, Jefferson County

John Stanfield, Highland Park, Jefferson County

Leon Hamrick, Mountain Brook, Jefferson County

Frank Selman, Southside, Jefferson County

William Wise, Eutaw, Greene County

Johnnie D. Hutchins, Cottdale, Tuscaloosa County

John Lossie, Bessemer, Jefferson County

Floy Spencer, Bessemer, Jefferson County

John Godwin, Cropwell, St. Clair County

Claude Brooks, Vestavia Hills, Jefferson County

Emmett Barber, Pell City, St. Clair County

William Early, Ensley, Jefferson County

Charles R. Reynolds, Hueytown, Jefferson County

Calvin C. Tanner, Shelby County

Edward W. Newman, Midfield, Jefferson County

Samuel Patton, Highland Park, Jefferson County

Betram Ferrell, Vestavia Hills, Jefferson County

Dewey Powell, Moody, St. Clair County

The following veterans passed away prior to the Honor Flight trip: John Flemming (Jefferson County), John Hines (St. Clair County), and Clyde Letcher (St. Clair County).